

HR Weekly Podcast

7/6/07

Today is July 6, 2007, and welcome to the HR weekly podcast from the State Office of Human Resources. This week's topic concerns Human Resources related legislative changes made during the South Carolina General Assembly's 2007 legislative session.

On June 25, 2007, the Governor signed Senate Bill 332 which makes significant changes to the state's workers' compensation system. Examples of provisions within this reform bill include narrowing the definition of "injuries" and "personal injuries" available for compensation; devolving the Second Injury Fund effective July 1, 2013; and expanding and strengthening the penalties for fraudulent conduct. For more information about the impact of this particular bill, contact the Workers' Compensation Commission.

The Governor has also signed House Bill 3358, which repeals § 8-11-10 of the South Carolina Code of Laws regarding office hours for state agencies. The statute required that state agencies remain open from 9 A.M. until 5 P.M. from Monday through Friday except in those agencies where seven day a week services are maintained. Although this statute has been deleted, the State Human Resources Regulations still require that no state agency shall have less than a 37.5-hour workweek and that, generally, the core hours of an agency are 8:30 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., Monday through Friday.

In a change to the state's unemployment compensation laws, the General Assembly has passed Senate Bill 334. This bill makes an individual who has left work voluntarily to relocate because of the transfer of a spouse, who has been reassigned from one military assignment to another, eligible for unemployment compensation.

In an effort to improve the number of qualified nurses in this state, the General Assembly has passed Senate Bill 657, The South Carolina Critical Needs Nursing Initiative Act. The Act creates the Critical Needs Nursing Initiative Fund within the Commission on Higher Education, which, among other things, will provide nursing faculty salary enhancements and create new nursing faculty positions. The Act also creates the Office for Health Care Workforce Research to analyze health care workforce supply and demand.

In addition to the deletion of the proviso regarding exemptions from the Grievance Act which was discussed in last week's podcast, the 2007-2008 Appropriation Act also deletes the provision for state agencies to institute voluntary employee furlough programs.

For complete details of these pieces of legislation, please refer to the General Assembly web site (at <http://www.scstatehouse.net/>) or the Office of Human Resources web site (at <http://www.ohr.sc.gov/OHR/legupdate/HRRelatedLegislation06-07.doc>).

If you need additional information or have any questions regarding the legislation discussed in this podcast or other HR related legislation, please call your Human Resources Consultant at 737-0900.

Thank you.